

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE**

### **Fiscal Year 2005**

#### **Major Accomplishments:**

The Comprehensive Planning Committee (CPC) & Joint Capital Planning Committee (JCPC) presented an article to Special Fall 2004 Town Meeting, Article 28, which asked that the Town raise and appropriate \$20,000 to develop a public participation process, a comprehensive Scope of Services, a Request for Proposals, and cost estimates for the completion of a Master Plan as required under Massachusetts General Laws 41, Section 81D. On November 15, 2004, Town Meeting approved this article. This action was necessary to fulfill the purpose of Article 27, Extension of the Phased Growth Bylaw, which, by a 2/3 vote, provided five calendar years from November 15, 2004 in order to provide the Town time to prepare and implement a Master Plan.

CPC interviewed two consultant firms in public session early this year to assist us with this phase of the master-planning process. CPC members (some of whom are quite new) began to re-familiarize themselves with some of the various existing planning documents, some going back to 1969!

Starting in April, CPC members and our chosen consultant, Jeanne Armstrong of LandUse, Incorporated, continued the necessary outreach process with briefings and small group discussions, leading to a community-wide forum. The forum series name is "Planning Amherst Together," and the first one was held in the Grace Church Parish Hall across from the Common on June 16, 2005, during opening night of the Taste of Amherst. Although 75 people signed in, approximately 90 participated. Efforts at outreach and feedback continued over the summer into FY 06. In addition to verbal face-to-face conversations with other boards and committees, as well as a variety of other formal and informal groupings, CPC developed and carefully distributed (to all Town Meeting members, all Town board and committee members, and via displays at each public library, Town Hall and the Bangs Center) a written questionnaire to begin to lay the groundwork for a survey that will be both helpful and scientifically reliable in the next phase of the master-planning effort. A separate questionnaire is being distributed among Town employees to gain their unique perspective on how the Master Plan will be most useful in their positions.

#### **Future Plans:**

CPC will fulfill the purpose of Article 28 on time by completing the following prior to Special Fall Town Meeting 2005: outline of a substantive public participation process, a comprehensive Scope of Services, a Request for Proposals, and cost estimates for the completion of a Master Plan as required under Massachusetts General Laws 41, Section 81D.

CPC will request that an article appear on the Special Fall Town Meeting 2005 warrant for appropriation of funds to complete a Master Plan. The following funds were "bookmarked" for this purpose in the five-year capital plan presented to Town Meeting in Spring 2005: \$65,000 for FY 06, and \$85,000 for FY 07.

**Membership Changes FY 05:**

At the Comprehensive Planning Committee's request, the Select Board officially changed Committee composition to the current slots, which the Committee felt represented a breadth of stakeholders given the Committee's function as a "committee of committees." The Committee continues to actively seek candidates of wider racial and language diversity.

**Resignations:**

Arnold Friedmann, at-large since 1996, then Council On Aging (COA) representative, resigned to pursue other interests.

Judith Steinkamp, non-voting UMass liaison since forever, resigned due to her resignation from UMass Facilities Planning to pursue employment out of Amherst.

**New members added:**

Cyrus Cox, at-large

Bill Gillen, Chamber of Commerce

Bruce Griffin, Conservation Commission

Teru Jellerette, at-large

Matthieu Massengill, Finance Committee

Martha Nelson, UMass Community Relations, became non-voting UMass liaison

Walter Wolnik, Public Transportation

We were unable to fill the COA slot between Arnold's resignation in mid-May and the end of FY 05.

All Committee officers continued to serve since their election January 27, 2004:

Alisa Brewer, Chair; Bob Grose, Vice-Chair; Aaron Hayden, Secretary.

The Comprehensive Planning Committee deeply appreciates the ongoing support provided by Niels la Cour, Planning Department, who shares the distinction with member Bob Grose of being part of the Comprehensive Planning Committee since its inception. We would also call attention to the many years of thoughtful service provided by Eva Schiffer, Select Board liaison to the Comprehensive Planning Committee since its inception. Eva retired from the Select Board in March, but continues to make connections between our outreach and planning efforts and her other community work, and tirelessly supports the continued work of the Comprehensive Planning Committee. We offer her our heartfelt thanks.

**Current membership at the end of FY 05 (name, affiliation, original appointment date):**

Alisa Brewer, School Committee, 2000

Cyrus Cox, at-large, 2005

Bill Gillen, Chamber of Commerce, 2005

Bruce Griffin, Conservation Commission, 2005

Robert Grose, at-large, 1997

Aaron Hayden, Planning Board, 2003

Teru Jellerette, at-large, 2005

Doug Kohl, at-large, 2002

Joanne Levenson, Housing Partnership/Fair Housing Committee, 2001

Matthieu Massengill, Finance Committee, 2005

Alan Root, at-large, 2002

Mary Scipioni, at-large, then Planning Board, 2004

Merrylees (Molly) Turner, Library Trustee, 2002  
James Wald, Historical Commission, 2004  
Walter Wolnik, Public Transportation, 2004  
Stan Ziomek, LSSE Commission, 2004  
Larry Archey, non-voting liaison, Hampshire College  
Peter Shea, non-voting liaison, Amherst College  
Martha Nelson, non-voting liaison, UMass  
Eva Schiffer, Select Board liaison